



## 2000 Aviation Awareness Art Contest Winners

Once again our office received a great number of high quality entries for our Aviation Awareness Art contest. This year's winners are Brent Bouma of Lincoln, MT - grades 9-12 category, Crystal Dorne, Swan Lake, MT – grades 5-8 category and Ray Martin, Cut Bank, MT in the grades 1-4 category. Contest winners along with their parents were flown to Helena on May 8, 2000 and presented with a trophy and plaque from Governor Marc Racicot, following the ceremony all were treated to lunch and a tour of the Helena Regional Airport before returning home. As the grand prize winner, Brent will be attending the annual Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Air Academy from July 19-28, 2000 at Oshkosh, WI.



*Pictured above winners Ray, Brent, Crystal and Samantha receive their awards from Governor Marc Racicot and Mike Ferguson*



*Above Brent receives his ribbon from Governor Racicot. Brent's trip to Oshkosh would not be possible without the generous donations from Montana's aviation community.*

This year's 2nd and 3rd place winners are as follows:

Category I – Grades 1-4

2<sup>nd</sup> – Brittany Yother, Helena, MT

3<sup>rd</sup> – Patrick DeNitto, Florence, MT

Category II – Grades 5-8

2<sup>nd</sup> – Samantha Dorne, Swan Lake, MT

3<sup>rd</sup> – Kristy Sparks, Laurel, MT

Category III – Grades 9-12

2<sup>nd</sup> – Morgan Kinney, Florence, MT

3<sup>rd</sup> – Nellie Ballou, Helena, MT

Our Congratulations goes out to all of the winners for the time and dedication they put into their artwork.

## Administrator's Column

**Condolences:** It was with great concern when our office received the call from the Great Falls Flight Service Station that a Lynch Flying Service Cessna 414 was suspected to be down somewhere south-east of Great Falls due to severe icing. It was reported that the pilot in command was Vinnie Frezzo, a long time Lynch pilot. We later learned that two other Lynch pilots, Nick Sorenson and David Whitman were also on board being ferried back to Billings. There were no passengers on the flight. It was snowing in Great Falls and in the area where the C-414 went off radar. There was no ELT signal being picked up by the satellites. The weather improved during the night and very early the next morning a search aircraft piloted by Denny Lynch with Joe Lynch as observer were able to climb above the clouds and picked up an ELT signal in the area where the aircraft went off radar. The mountains were still socked in so they flew on to the Great Falls search base which Jeanne MacPherson of the Aeronautics Division had set up to wait for the weather to improve. There were several volunteer search aircraft ready to fly when the weather improved. Denny and Joe returned to the area later in the morning and again were able to pick up the ELT signal. They circled the area and directed the USAF rescue helicopter from Malmstrom AFB in to crash site. While Vinnie was well known throughout Montana and had many friends, Nick and David had not been with Lynch very long and were not well known, we also must recognize the painful loss of their loved ones as well. On behalf on the Aeronautics Board and Division as well as Montana's entire aviation community, I'd like to extend our condolences to the families and loved ones of Vinnie, Nick and David as well as all of those at Lynch Flying Service. I know that we are all stunned and saddened by this tragedy. ➔

### Back Country Airstrip Bill Passes:

The House National Parks and Public Lands Subcommittee approved legislation (H.R. 3661), called the General Aviation Access Act which was introduced by Subcommittee Chairman Representative James Hansen (Utah) that would establish a formal public notification process before a federal land manager could close or purposefully neglect a back-country airstrip. The vote was close, 6 to 5 and included an amendment sponsored by subcommittee Chairman Jim Hansen (Utah) that attempted to address some key concerns raised about the bill in a hearing last month. The amendment eliminated a provision in the bill which would have required the FAA Administrator's approval before a back country airstrip could be closed, because the FAA only takes responsibility for public airports with based aircraft. The amendment also states "nothing in this act shall be construed to create or authorize additional aircraft landing strips" and covers only aircraft landing strips identified on state or FAA aeronautical charts and allows federal land managers to enter into cooperative agreements with "interested parties" to maintain the landing strips. As we can expect, key Clinton Administration officials expressed strong opposition to the bill, saying it "would

impose new, unanticipated and extensive management and financial burdens on the land management agencies." However, several members on the subcommittee made the point that the Clinton Administration already is making local decisions at the federal level. "From mountain bikers, equestrians, and snowmobilers alike we heard the same story: this Administration is locking the public out of public lands" stated Representative Helen Chenoweth-Hage (Utah), who Chairs the subcommittee on forests and forest health. "Hopefully, efforts such as Mr. Hansen's will keep backcountry airstrips from being just another pawn in the Administration's plan to lock up federal lands." I was contacted by Senator Burns office today and informed that Senator Burns will be co-sponsoring a similar bill in the Senate. ➔

### McCain Gets Heat from Arizona Pilots:

A group of Arizona pilots have circulated a petition urging Senator John McCain to support the nomination of Phil Boyer, President of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) to serve on the congressionally mandated Federal Aviation Management Advisory Council (MAC). MAC is to act in an advisory capacity to the FAA on management, policy, spending and regulatory matters. In last month's issue of Montana and The Sky I reported on the Senate Commerce Committee confirmation hearing which is chaired by Senator John McCain and how Senator McCain verbally attacked Boyer and questioned his qualifications to serve on the MAC. McCain is upset with Boyer because of AOPA's opposition to aviation user fees which McCain and President Clinton want. As of this writing, the Senate Commerce Committee still has not scheduled a vote on the MAC nominations and "insiders" say that it is uncertain if McCain will support Boyer's nomination. ➔

**Blind Rivet Integrity Questioned:** The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has recommended to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that a "maintenance alert" be issued to inform mechanics about the potential hazards of installing "blind" rivets. The NTSB also recommended that the FAA regulations be changed to make it clear that repairs involving the substitution of different rivets should be considered "major" repairs. These recommendations resulted from the NTSB investigation of an Eurocopter helicopter crash in New York where the vertical fin failed due to replacement of a servo mount support substituting solid rivets with Cherry Max blind rivets. The NTSB "is concerned that other maintenance personnel may install blind rivets in applications where solid rivets are required, thereby reducing the structural fatigue life of an airframe. It said FAA should issue a maintenance alert to all certificated airframe mechanics and inspectors to notify them of the circumstances of this accident and to inform them of the hazards associated with the installation of blind rivets." ➔



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# Aerospace Education Teachers Workshop

An Aerospace Education Teachers Workshop will be held at the Parmly Billings Library on Saturday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>. Part I of the teachers workshop will be held from 9:00 am to 11:30 am and will be conducted by Donald Scott of NASA and will focus on lunar science. Teachers who attend will be certified to borrow actual lunar rock and soil samples from NASA which were brought back from the moon during the Apollo missions. Part II of the teachers workshop will be held from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm and will be conducted by Captain Kaye R. Ebelt from the Civil Air Patrol (CAP).

Captain Ebelt is a social studies teacher at Target Range Middle School in Missoula and received the General Aviation and Manufacturers Association's Excellence in Aviation Education Award at the 1999 National Congress on Aviation and Space Education for a program that she developed for her school. She is also a civilian pilot and a CAP emergency services mission observer and she has also received some astronaut training as a candidate in NASA's teacher in space program which resulted in the death of teacher Crista McAuliffe in 1986 Challenger Shuttle disaster.

To pre-register for the Aerospace Education Teachers Workshop simply call Cindy Patterson or Burke Eschler in Youth Services at the Parmly Billings Library at 657-8256. There is no activity fee to participate in this teachers workshop, it is being organized as a public service compliment of Parmly Billings Library, the Big Sky Rocketry Association and Montana Wing – Civil Air Patrol.

## AOPA Advocates Chart Changes

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association is pushing for changes to both VFR and IFR charts to provide better information to pilots.

AOPA wants Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC) frequencies on VFR charts so pilots can easily learn the status of military operations areas (MOAs). The association also is asking for city names and airport identifiers to be added to airport legends on low-altitude instrument en route charts.

The pilots' association advocated these and other changes during the recent Government/Industry Aeronautical Charting Forum. The forum oversees policy and procedures for instrument and VFR charting, and for the design of instrument approaches.

In the March charting forum, AOPA advocated inclusion of ARTCC frequencies on VFR sectional charts so pilots can call for "real-time" status of military operations areas.

Flight Service Stations don't always know if the military is actually using MOA airspace. Frequently, the only information available to an FSS is the published time a MOA could be active. That's seldom more than the data currently printed on VFR sectional charts.

Center controllers, on the other hand, always knows when military aircraft are actually using a MOA, since instrument flights must be routed around an active military operations area.

## EAA AirVenture Forums Easier to Find

Visitors to EAA AirVenture Oshkosh are now able to create their own personal schedule from the more than 500 aviation forums, workshops and seminars available. Thanks to new technology at [www.airventure.org](http://www.airventure.org), the official web site of the event.

Beginning June 1, all of the educational sessions at EAA AirVenture, which will be held July 16- August 1 at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh, will be listed on the web site's "Forums" area. Web site users will be able to sort the sessions by date, time, aviation interest or presenter. In addition, more information on individual sessions will be available, including presenter's biography, photo and other forums and workshops during EAA AirVenture.

When a visitor to web site connects with the Eclipse Aviation Forums Plaza page, that person can choose to view the forums schedule in several options: by date/time, presenter, interest group or keyword search. For each forum listed, there is a link to the forum's location, presenter information and related topics.

## Calendar

**June 14 – 16** – The Revolution in General Aviation, Corvallis, Oregon. Contact Bill Wilkins at [bwilkins@orst.edu](mailto:bwilkins@orst.edu) (541)737-7487 or Ann Crook at [ann.b.crook@odot.state.or.us](mailto:ann.b.crook@odot.state.or.us) (800)874-0102.

**June 15 – 17** – MAAA Air Tour.

**June 18** - Annual Poorboy Sourdough Pancake Breakfast Feed, Beacon Star Airfield.

**July 5 – 8** – Arlington EAA Airshow.

**July 14 – 16** – Schafer Meadows Annual Work Session.

**July 14 – 16** – Seeley Lake Fly-in.

**July 19 – 23** – International Flying Farmer Convention, Sheraton Inn, Billings. Call Marilyn or Jim Lewis at (406)538-9739.

**July 22 – 23** – United States Air and Trade Show, Dayton International Airport, Dayton, OH, [www.usats.org](http://www.usats.org).

**July 26 – August 1** – Experimental Aircraft Association AirVenture, Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

**July 29 – 30** – Big Sky International Airshow, Billings.

**August 3 – 6** – MAAA Fly-in, Three Forks.

**August 11 – 13** – Abbotsford Airshow 2000. Call (604)852-8511 or [www.abbotsfordairshow.com](http://www.abbotsfordairshow.com).

**August 18 – 20** – Flight Safety Expo, McCall, Idaho.

**August 19 – 20** – Fort Peck/Valley MPA Hangar Fly-in. Boating, water skiing, fishing, camping. Float planes invited.

**August 26** – Second Annual Fly-in Polson Airport. Call Tom Seabase 883-9392 or [aerowork@digisys.net](mailto:aerowork@digisys.net).

**September 2 – 4** – Cleveland National Air Show, Burke Lakefront Airport, Cleveland, OH, [www.clevelandairshow.com](http://www.clevelandairshow.com).

**September 2 – 4** – West Yellowstone Labor Day Fly-in, Yellowstone Airport.

**September 9 – 10** – South Central Hangar Club Fall Fly-in, Laurel Airport.

**September 9 – 13** – NASAO 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention and Trade Show, Long Beach, CA.

**September 14 – 17** – Reno Air Races.

**September 16 – 17** – Oregon Air Fair 2000, Albany Fairgrounds. Info: NW Aviation Association (800)547-6922.

**September 30 – October 1** – Springfield Air Rendezvous 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Air Show featuring the USAF Thunderbird Demonstration Team, Capital Airport, Springfield, IL (217)789-4400.

**October 10 – 12** – National Business Aviation Association 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting & Convention, New Orleans, LA.

## Bob Wolk Recognition Day

Bob Wolk retired after 40 years of dedicated service to the community of Cut Bank as a volunteer on the Cut Bank Airport Authority Board. Wolk was honored at the First Annual Introduction To Aviation Day during the recognition ceremonies open house at the airport. During the ceremony the board made Wolk a lifetime honorary board member and airport historian.

Wolk was born in North Dakota and the oldest of three children. The family moved to Gallop City when the gas field opened in Conrad. From Gallop City the family moved to a camp 13 miles northeast of Cut Bank.

Wolk learned to drive a car by the time he was eight years old and could hardly see over the hood. He attended Meadowbrook School and that is where he met his future wife, Jewell Peterson.

As a young man, he enrolled in a flying school in Inglewood, CA. Upon completing the flying course, Wolk went to work for Johnson Drake and Piper. He flew freight all over Africa. He came back to the United States and married Jewel. The young couple lived in Inglewood for a time then came back to Montana in 1946.

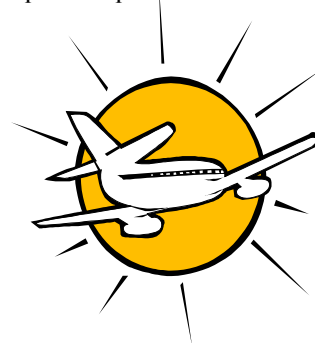
*Bob and Jewell Wolk receive congratulations and thanks from the Cut Bank Airport Authority and the entire Cut Bank community.*



Wolk has been flying for many years and enjoys being around aircraft. For a few years now, he has been designing a replica of a 1920/1930s airplane in his garage. His knowledge of the history of the early days of the Cut Bank Airport will be beneficial to tourists as well as to students and adults of our community.

The Wolks were blessed with four birth children, Roberta Jean, Fritz Paul, Lori Helen and Jody, and three adopted children, Marian, Luella and Nancy.

Bob has donated many hours to the preservation and growth of the Cut Bank Airport over the years. The community of Cut Bank wishes to express their appreciation for all his help and expertise.



## Runway Safety Area Markers

### Background:

From time to time we get questions on Runway Safety Area (RSA) Markers: what is the purpose; are they required; where do they go; how many is enough; what are they made of; and how are they installed. Below is a discussion to help answer some of these typical questions. Also, this is intended to remind those who have forgotten about these helpful aids in hope that they get installed on the next airport project you work on.

### Discussion:

RSA markers define the limits of the safety area that has special up keep needs such as mowing, grading, and drainage. The RSA is defined area surrounding the runway which is capable of supporting the occasional aircraft in dry conditions without significant damage to the aircraft.

There are no specific standards or requirements for a safety area marker. They are intended to aid in a visual depiction of this special area to assist airport owners in their maintenance needs. We have made suggestions over the years and several "designs" have popped up from various engineers.

A further key to understanding their use and make-up is found in a more detailed examination of their purpose. RSA's are rectangular in shape and extends twice as far beyond the runway ends as they are wide. The markers help in making instant decisions whether that rut, hole, rock, or bump is within this critical area and thus needs immediate attention.

The markers could be anything that is visible yet does not in itself pose a problem to safety or create an excessive maintenance problem.

Keep in mind that the markers are for the airport owner and their maintenance staff, not pilots. Thus there is no need for them to be reflective - since they are a day time visual cue to aid in mowing, rock picking, hole filling, grading, where not to place snow piles, where not to leave objects such as your vehicle when you are repairing that edge light, etc.

Our earlier suggestions for the larger airports was to use a PVC conduit with fluorescent orange color approx. 5 feet high spaced every 500 feet along the edge of the RSA. Note: all the larger airports have 500 foot RSA's - you would not place a 5 foot tall marker on a 120 or 150 foot wide RSA - same as you would not place a larger size sign close to a runway edge - you scale it down (edge lights can be as high as 30" in snow areas - thus a marker can be 30" high for the smaller RSA's without posing a height problem). We suggested the pvc conduit be installed so it could be removed for mowing purposes - such as slipping inside another tube that was encased in concrete that was flush to the ground level. We have considered 2" pvc thin-wall conduit to be frangible.

For the smaller airports - and thus the narrower RSA's, we see the pvc reflective edge marker used most often. That's probably due to convenience rather than a necessity. The 2" pvc reflective edge marker comes in different colors, styles, etc. and is inserted in a stake mounted support that when struck it pops out of the rubberized socket. Usually theses are 24 to 30 inches in height and yellow or orange. Do not use white or blue as the color since those colors are associated with taxiway or runway edge lighting. The key is that they are visible during the day when you would be inspecting the RSA.

The spacing of the markers is also important. When you stand on the edge of the RSA, you need to see the markers in a line so you can judge where the limit is. The more the ground changes in elevation the closer the spacing. When you are doing the surveying for the project, determine what spacing would provide a good visual cue, or line-of-sight for the markers with a certain height and color.

We also suggest the markers be place a little beyond the actual dimensions for width and length of the RSA - say a foot or so outside.

Vehicles need to be parked outside the RSA limits when the runway is active - this is especially useful during maintenance or construction activities, thus the markers should go in early during the construction project.

Hope this helps - call or e-mail me if you have any questions. We also encourage suggestions or comments on what works best for you - we would be glad to share any ideas with the rest of our Montana community. \

John Styba, Airports District Office (406)449-5271; (406)449-5274 fax; or e-mail: john.styba@faa.gov



# Aviation Days



Remember being in the eighth grade; riding bikes, gobbling candy, desperately trying to develop ‘good study habits’, wondering just what you want to do ‘when you grow up’?

Thirty-eight students in just this predicament got their chance to discover Aviation as a Career during the Sixth Annual Aviation Days. Sponsored by the Montana Pilot’s Association, Flathead Valley students converged on Kalispell City Airport to learn air traffic control, search and rescue missions, survival techniques, and how to become a pilot of powered and glider aircraft. Local volunteers taught these classes in the morning and airplane rides were given all afternoon to students by Montana Aeronautic’s own, Jeanne MacPherson and Mike Ferguson.

The Army’s Huey and Blackhawk helicopters chopped their way in to the event for impressive arrivals and static displays. The pilots of each helicopter toured students through their rigs while impressing them on the importance of education and the opportunity for a

*Beautiful weather accompanied Aviation Days at the Kalispell City Airport. Red Eagle Aviation was the site for these excited students as they experienced and enjoyed a fun-filled day of aviation. Students learn as Jeanne MacPherson teaches survival techniques.*



*This T-6 was a huge hit as students watched it fly-by and then got a close-up, hands-on look as it sat of the ramp. Below, Mike Ferguson loads students as they anxiously await their Young Eagle ride.*



career in aviation via the military.

The one-day event was graced with standard fly-by spectacles by a local pilot with a bright yellow T-6 and an original Navy Corsair. “Make it loud!” we yelled, each time the Corsair made his low pass over the runway.

Students and accompanying teachers and parents enjoyed the variety of activities offered at Aviation Days.

After the days’ event, one student took a demo flight with a local flight instructor in his quest to begin flight training.

A successful Aviation Day once again accomplished providing Flathead Valley students with a career option they might not have thought could be more than a dream, but a reality.



# A Tribute to the Forgotten Mechanic

*Through the history of world aviation many names have come to the fore...*

*Great deeds of the past in our memory will last, as they're joined by more and more...*

*When man first started his labor in his quest to conquer the sky he was designer, mechanic, and pilot, and he built a machine that would fly...*

*But somehow the order got twisted, and then in the public's eye the only man that could be seen was the man who knew how to fly...*

*The pilot was everyone's hero, he was brave, he was old, he was grand, as he stood by his battered old airplane with his goggles and helmet in hand...*

*To be sure, these pilots all earned it, to fly you have to have guts...*

*And they blazed their names in the hall of fame on wings with bailing wire struts...*

*But for each of these flying heroes there were thousands of little renown, and these were the men who worked on the planes but kept their feet on the ground...*

*We all know the name of Lindbergh, and we've read of his flight to fame...*

*But think, if you can, of his maintenance man, can you remember his name?*

*And think of our wartime heroes, Gabreski, Jabara, and Scott..*

*Can you tell me the names of their crew chiefs? A thousand to one you cannot...*

*Now pilots are highly trained people, and Wings are not easily won...*

*But without the work of the maintenance man our pilots would march with a gun...*

*So when you see mighty aircraft as they mark their way through the air, the grease-stained man with the wrench in his hand is the man who put them there...*

The anonymous author of this composition must surely have had an appreciation and respect for those of us past and present who endeavor to promote aviation safety to the highest possible level. We endure the environmental extremes of the flight line and are content to allow those who are pilots to reap the glory of the public eye. We are content to remain in the background with the calm assurance that we have given our all in the pursuit of safety in aviation. We swell with pride as we watch the product of our labor rise gracefully from the runway and embrace a pristine sky.

The greatest and most valued recognition we can hope to receive comes from our peers and from within. The Aviation Awards Program, started recently by the FAA, has become one of the most coveted forms of recognition for maintenance personnel. Its rewards are not easily attained, and only those individuals with uncompromising and long-suffering moral and ethical values are found worthy. This program stresses education, training, and superior performance as well as the other attributes mentioned here, to praise those worthy of its tests. Our most valued assets are the tools of our trade, our reputation, integrity, and

the respect of our customers who put their lives in our hands.

With the many technological and sociological advances in aviation over the years, many of the ideas put forth in this poem are no longer valid. For example, "bailing wire" is very much frowned upon as wing strut and hinge pin material. For the most part, maintenance personnel no longer fit the stereotype of a "grease-stained man." The stereotype has been distorted and propagated by the entertainment media. The "grease-stained man" with a rag hanging from his pocket, a cap with a "turned-up bill," and a "less than intelligent look on his face," is purely at fictional character conjured to provide contrast and further embellish the flyer. Also, not all maintenance men are men; there are many women who have earned a position among our ranks and have made significant contributions to aviation maintenance safety.

Through the evolution of aviation maintenance, the requirements of brawn has been replaced by an ever-expanding requirement for brainpower. With the complex nature of today's aeronautical products, has come maintenance people who can analyze, forecast, and troubleshoot problems by use of the computer. (Usually, we don't get "grease-stained" from this activity.) The ever-changing demands for maintaining today's aircraft present a new challenge each day. These challenges are met with an eager enthusiasm to learn something new and to "put things right." We approach each new challenge with a proud and confident demeanor, which seems to say, "you can't break anything that I can't fix!"

## Reminder: Aeronautical Chart Revisions

The Montana Aeronautics Division is currently in the process of updating its Aeronautical Chart. The Division is dependent on you, to help us make the most accurate chart possible. If you notice any errors, omissions or corrections on our current chart please let us know. Of particular interest to us is the status of private use airports on the chart. Since Montana has no regulations concerning the existence of private use airports, we rely on you to help keep us informed so we can make alterations to our chart. If you notice any airports listed on the chart which are no longer useable as airstrips, or you notice any airports in existence that are not on our chart, please let us know at your earliest convenience. For correction, comments or suggestions concerning the new chart, please send them to:

**Montana Aeronautics Division  
Attn: Aero Chart Revisions  
P.O. Box 5178  
Helena, MT 59604-5178**

or you can phone us at 406-444-2506 or fax us at 406-444-2519. Our new chart is published every four years with the next release due out this December. In order for us to have time to make the corrections, we must have all corrections submitted no later than September 30<sup>th</sup> 2000. Thanks!

## SkyWest Resumes Seasonal Service to Salt Lake City

SkyWest Airlines resumed Delta Connection service between West Yellowstone and Salt Lake City on June 1, 2000 by providing three daily roundtrips to Salt Lake City.

Service between the markets will use the popular 30-passenger cabin-class Brasilia aircraft, featuring overhead/underseat storage, single or paired seating configuration, flight attendant, snack/beverage service, and lavatory.

Currently, SkyWest's fleet consists of 92 EMB120 Turboprops, 12 Canadair Regional Jets, with an additional 54 Canadair Regional Jets on order. As the nation's fourth largest regional carrier, the airline provides nearly 1,000 daily departures servicing 13 western states and Canada.

## In Memory of Vinnie Frezzo

Vincent “Vinnie” James Frezzo died May 31, 2000 on Barker Mountain south of Great Falls in an airplane crash. He was born September 4, 1941 in Mount Vernon, N.Y., the son of Carmine and Olga (Cristiani) Frezzo.

He attended schools in Mount Vernon and graduated from A.B. Davis High School in 1959. He studied forestry at Paul Smith’s College, Paul Smith N.Y., graduating with an associate’s degree in 1963. He continued his study of forestry at the University of Montana, graduating with a B.S. degree in 1966. He joined the U.S. Air Force, raising to the rank of captain. He served in Viet Nam as the maintenance officer for Froward Air Control at DanNang.

Vinnie returned to Montana, where he worked on a master’s degree in range management at UofM and became a commercial pilot with Johnson Flying Service in Missoula. He also worked for the State Department of Forestry. In 1978, he was the first director of maintenance for the newly formed Big Sky Airlines. He later worked as a pilot for Strand Aviation in Kalispell and Minuteman Aviation in Missoula and Kalispell. In 1986, he started Vinnies’s Italian Kitchen in downtown Billings, serving food based on his mother’s recipes. After closing the restaurant in 1996, he went to work for Lynch Flying Service as a commercial charter pilot and training supervisor.

Proud of his Italian heritage, Vinnie was loved by many for his sense of humor, genial personality, deep friendships, loving nature and wonderful food that he cooked in his restaurant and at his home.

He is survived by his wife Mary Pickett Frezzo; his brother and sister-in-law, Ron and Camille Frezzo and nieces Cristina, Gina and Joanna Frezzo, all of Silver Spring, MD; brothers and sister-in-law, Frank and Donna Jean Pickett and John Pickett of Butte and niece Holly Pickett of Athens, GA; and nephews Matt, Jake and Kale Pickett of Butte and Luke Pickett of Tucson, AZ. He was preceded in death by his parents.

A memorial service was held June 6<sup>th</sup>, at First United Methodist Church. Memorial may be sent to the Museum of Mountain Flying, 4505 U.S. Highway 10, Missoula, MT 59808, Central MT Search and Rescue, P.O. Box 2801, Great Falls, MT 59403, or the Alzheimer’s Research Center, 640 Jackson St., St. Paul, MN 55101.

## The Price is Right

By: **James K. Coyne, President**  
**National Air Transportation Association (NATA)**

Maybe there’s not a lot to learn on television these days, but I’ve always been impressed by the longevity of one of the fixtures of daytime television, “The Price is Right.” For nearly 40 years, Bob Barker has used his simplistic game show to demonstrate how much (or how little) the average consumer knows about the prices of everyday items. Most of his contestants end up winning by demonstrating a remarkable familiarity with the price of everything from soup to nuts.

But there’s one product that has never been on “The Price is Right”: a simple gallon of gas. Why? Because there wouldn’t be any contest! We may not know if a Samsonite suitcase is worth \$35 or \$80, but just about everyone knows what a gallon of gas sells for at their local gas station. So, when gas prices are climbing, it’s something that’s on the mind of most of us.

It’s also something that leads to a lot of games in the real world especially at FBOs where customers find out that “the” price isn’t the same any more. After all unlike on the TV show, prices in the real world are dynamic- and our “mental” price doesn’t always keep pace with the marketplace. And with customers flying in from all over the country, the result can be a real challenge to even the most skilled customer service expert.

I watched an interesting example of this a few weeks ago when I stopped in to refuel at an FBO in Florida. The customer in line ahead of me had told the line crew to top his tanks, but then changed his mind when he saw the Jet A price was \$2.15. Unfortunately, information about his reduced fuel order didn’t get out to the Jet A fuel truck in time, so he refused to pay for the extra gallons.

“Either take the extra 100 gallons out of the tanks, or give me a 40 cent-a-gallon discount,” he demanded “I pay \$1.75 a gallon back at my home base at XYZ,” he argued, “and that’s what the price ought to be.”

I began to feel really sorry for the young lady behind the counter who was the target of all this abuse. “Excuse me,” I interrupted, “but I know XYZ airport and it’s not really fair to compare this airport with that one. This FBO has very different costs, provides different services, and operates under different market conditions. Besides, as a tenant at XYZ, you could negotiate special terms that you can’t expect them to match here as a transient. And by the way, XYZ has raised their prices three times in the last two months.”

The angry Citation II owner didn’t want to listen to me or to anyone else. He bellowed over and over that \$1.75 is the price that “everyone” pays and he would stand there until Hades was below minimums. Almost at tears, the customer agent went in to see her manager. He calmly came to the counter, told the line crew to pump out the 100 gallons, and politely told the customer that their price wasn’t the same as whatever he claimed the price to be at XYZ.

As my family and I enjoyed our lunch at the FBO’s restaurant, we watched the line crew pump out the extra gallons and wondered if it had all been a little game. On the wall was a humorous aviation poster listing the 32 biggest lies in aviation. Maybe “I pay \$1.75 a gallon at home” should be added to the list. Had the customer from Hades tried this ruse before, changing his fuel order in midstream and pleading poverty, and gotten away with it? Or was he really so price-sensitive that he would waste 45 minutes to lower the annual operating cost of a multi-million dollar plane by \$40?

Even some of the contestants on “The Price is Right” are losers, so we shouldn’t be too surprised to run across a few in our daily lives. Some people just don’t understand how the real market works. As OPEC doubles the price of a barrel of crude, the ripples extend to every corner of our economy, and each retail seller of fuel establishes his own price based on his own local market conditions.

Some consumers would like to set their own price, but that kind of market power is very unusual. More typically, the consumer gets to choose the seller, and the seller gets to declare the price. That’s why, as almost any economist will tell you, prices vary so much. Week by week and day by day, each individual FBO evaluates its specific market, costs, and expected return on investment, and then calculates at retail price. After he’s done his homework, there’s really no debate—that’s when the price is right.

## ImPROPER Engine Starts

Many small airplanes have impulse magnetos installed which use sensitive spring-loaded compiling to produce a series of sudden rotation - and hot sparks - during starting. If the magnetos are ON, even the slightest manual turn off a prop may be enough to snap the magneto and start the engine, as this unlucky pilot discovered:

*The airplane had been having difficulty starting... The battery had just been replaced. I tried to start the engine without success and got out to adjust the prop. I neglected to turn off the magnetos and when I moved the propeller, the engine started. The prop hit me on the head and right elbow. I was hospitalized for 5 days. The incident could have been prevented if I had been certain I turned off the Magnetos.*

Any pilot hand-turning a prop should make sure the magnetos are in the OFF position. In addition, hand-propping is never a one-person job. A second person is always needed in the cockpit to apply brakes.

# Aero Chart Photo Contest

By: *James R. Greil*

*Airport/Airways Bureau*

The Montana Aeronautics Division is in the process of updating our Montana Aeronautical Chart. The chart is published every four years, and is consecutive with the term of office for the governor.

The Division is looking for some fresh photos for the chart. We are hopeful that many of you may have some pictures you are willing to share with us for inclusion on the chart. The photos should depict scenes of aviation activity in Montana including recreation, work related, fly-ins, logging, fire fighting, aerial shots - anything that shows use of aircraft in typical Montana fashion. Rural and backcountry settings are a great idea for picturesque qualities.

The only catch is that we need colored 35mm slides - no prints. Slides provide a far superior end product due to the color separation process used in printing the chart. Please mark each slide with your name and address. We will keep all slides unless you specifically specify that you would like them returned. If you would like them returned, please indicate so. The top rated entries will be used as part of our aeronautical chart, and the photographer will receive credit for the photo on the chart and in our newsletter.

Due to the time constraint placed on us for new chart deliveries, we ask that you please have your photos to us no later than September 30<sup>th</sup> 2000. Send entries to:

**Montana Aeronautics Division**

**Attn: Aero Chart Revisions**

**P.O. Box 5178**

**Helena, MT 59604-5178**

Be sure to adequately protect your slides when mailing. For more information, contact Jim Greil at 444-2506. Thanks!



**PO Box 5178  
Helena, Montana 59604-5178**

**JUNE 2000**

## Where's Crocodile Dundee When You Need Him?

Nobody ever said a crocodile is discriminating in its love life — after all, they mate with other crocodiles. But one amorous croc sunk a seaplane moored in Princess Charlotte Bay, Australia, when it tried to mount one of the floats. The stunned crew watched from shore as the 10-foot crocodile got carried away and the seaplane tipped over and sank.

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